



# Funding for Domestic Violence in California

Commissioned by  
Blue Shield of California Foundation

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## Executive Summary

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Blue Shield of California Foundation (BSCF) commissioned this report to gather information about current funding for domestic violence in California, discuss challenges and explore opportunities. The information presented in this report can further the conversation about what funding the field really needs to address survivors' needs and effect change toward ending domestic violence in California.

The report is divided into five sections. The "Introduction" describes the sources of information and research methods. The primary source of information for this report is domestic violence providers who gave detail about their funding sources and also gave voice to the experience of addressing domestic violence with inadequate funding.

The second section, "Current Funding for Domestic Violence in California," describes the landscape, including information about foundation funding, government funding, and other sources. Perhaps unsurprisingly, one main finding of this report is that current funding for domestic violence is inadequate. Funding does not cover core operating costs, keeping agencies in a perpetual starvation cycle. Funding also does not allow for innovation. *Without more unrestricted funds domestic violence providers, our state's experts on the complex, socially significant issue of domestic violence, will never be able to apply that expertise to the larger issue of ending domestic violence.*

The third section, "What's Working," focuses on three main points: funders who listen; reliable, timely funding, preferably unrestricted; and more money. Providers who have been able to establish close relationships with funders – usually local funders – often are able to advocate for their true needs or access additional funds. In addition, California domestic violence providers are lucky to have a foundation champion – BSCF – that not only provides core operating support to agencies across the state but also funds the space for innovation. Interviewees from shelter-based programs also said that the reliability of state funding makes a huge difference in their ability to operate. Of course, more money always works; at the time that this report was written many agencies were applying for or starting to receive new funding from an increased distribution to California of federal funds.

**"Some of us are drowning."**

The fourth section discusses "What's Not Working" and again emphasizes the lack of funder support for core operating needs. In addition to this issue, many providers are primarily funded by reimbursement-based government contracts that create significant cash flow issues. In response to the question, "What would you do if you had more unrestricted dollars?" some interviewees' answers showed how far away many providers are from the ability to innovate. Top choices included "create 1 month operating reserve" and "pay down lines of credit."

Other main challenges raised include the frustration of working with bureaucracies, including the feeling that government does not hold itself accountable to the same standards they expect from their grantees. Additionally, providers named the issue of feeling the need to enter into unfunded partnerships to please funders and give away their expertise for free. Changes in funding for homeless prevention efforts came up as a particularly acute challenge at the time the report was written. Finally, the interviewees also discussed things the field has done that have contributed to their experience of funding challenges. Some said that we accept a power imbalance between the field and funders and make decisions based on our fear of losing funding.

In the report's final section, "Opportunities" are addressed. Ideas about how agencies would use more unrestricted funds ranged from descriptions of program gaps to visionary ideas for change. Some suggested asking the question: "Where do we have power?" in our relationships with funders.

**"We need to take responsibility; we are the grand visionaries who can end domestic violence."**

This author's recommendation for change is that something new needs to be done to address agencies' inability to maintain sufficient funds to pay for essential operating costs. Without addressing this issue people working in the field will not be able to apply their expertise to the future of the movement and the goal of ending domestic violence.

**A critical mass of service providers can ask for change.**

One possible action foundations can take is to partner with government funders so together they can fill existing funding gaps. Another option is to provide funding for domestic violence providers to develop collective strategies to ask for what they really need from government funders to run the programs governments rely on them to run. A third option is to support new communications strategies the field could use to attract more individual and corporate donors.

## Introduction

No comprehensive summary and analysis of domestic violence funding in California exists. This report provides an overview of current domestic violence funding, discusses challenges and explores opportunities. With this information Blue Shield of California Foundation (BSCF) and its partners can develop strategies to supplement or reimagine funding to better support a robust movement to end violence.

### Sources of information and research methods

In addition to gathering information from government websites and reviewing existing reports about domestic violence funding (see foundation funding overview below), the author referenced information about government funding gathered by both the National Network to End Domestic Violence and the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence.

The author also interviewed domestic violence providers. Two in-person meetings were held, one in Sacramento and one in the Bay Area, with a total of 15 agencies participating; an online survey received nine responses; and three telephone interviews were conducted. One of the telephone interviews was the author's only contact with the interviewee while the other two were follow-up interviews with people who responded to the online survey.

#### In-Person Meeting Questions:

- How are you currently funded?
- What does your funding pay for?
- What's working?
- What challenges do you face?
- What do you think your agency could do to end domestic violence that you currently are not funded to do?
- What are your ideas for change?

The telephone interviews were less structured and mostly focused on the more speculative questions asked in the in-person meetings and on the online survey.

A total of 25 agencies provided input through one of these methods. None of the comments in this report are attributed to individuals or agencies.

#### Online Survey Questions:

- Please indicate whether you receive any of the following government sources of funding. You can select multiple sources.
- Please indicate whether you receive any of the following sources of funding. You can select multiple sources.
- What percentage of your annual income comes from government sources?
- What percentage of your annual income comes from foundations?
- What types of services are funded by grants and contracts?
- What don't grants and contracts fund?
- What is working well for your agency re: funding?
- What are your agency's main challenges re: funding?
- What would you do if you had additional unrestricted funds?
- What do you think your agency could do to help end domestic violence that you currently are not funded to do?

## Current Funding for Domestic Violence in California

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The majority of funding for domestic violence services in California comes from government sources. The agencies interviewed stated that, on average, 16% of their funding comes from foundations and 66% from the government. Sixteen participants had 70% or more in government funding and 16 had 15% or less in foundation funding.

Foundation funding for domestic violence in California has already been summarized in a report published by BSCF, and national foundation support has been summarized in a report published by the Ms. Foundation. Both reports are summarized briefly below.

*Domestic violence agencies have secured some individual and corporate funding, but success varies greatly depending on the community where the agency is located and the individual strengths of agency leaders. Rural communities have less corporate presence and these communities tend to be lower income and more conservative, two factors that can hinder fundraising.*

### Foundation funding overview

The Ms. Foundation published a report in 2010 that summarized foundation funding efforts to address gender-based violence, including domestic violence, and the funding needs of agencies engaged in these efforts. The majority of the foundations surveyed said that over half of their grants were awarded for specific projects and less than one quarter for general operating expenses.<sup>1</sup> Most of the project funding went to intervention and direct services.<sup>2</sup> The agencies interviewed listed core-operating support as their primary funding need and after that, in priority order: prevention; services for marginalized populations; sexual assault services; policy work; advocacy and social change; and training.<sup>3</sup>

In 2014, the Foundation Center published a report commissioned by Blue Shield of California Foundation. Not surprisingly, BSCF was the largest funder, providing almost one-third of the dollars foundations gave to domestic violence.<sup>4</sup> BSCF also allocated 15% of their total grantmaking to domestic violence, as opposed to the 2-4.5% allocated by other top funders.<sup>5</sup> Of the top ten funders listed by dollar amount, many only fund specific geographic areas and others were funding initiatives at the time of the report that are no longer in effect.<sup>6</sup> Other notable report findings include the significant amounts given to agencies that are not providing direct services; half of the top ten recipients by amount are agencies that provide technical assistance or other support to direct service agencies.<sup>7</sup> In addition, 70% of foundation funding was provided to agencies in San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Diego, Alameda and Sacramento Counties.<sup>8</sup> Finally, 15% of foundation funding went to general operating support.<sup>9</sup> A copy of the report can be found at <http://www.blueshieldcafoundation.org/publications/foundation-funding-to-address-domestic-violence-california>.

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<sup>1</sup> Ms. Foundation for Women, "Efforts to Address Gender-Based Violence: A Look at Foundation Funding." 2010. Page 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Page 13.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* Page 15.

<sup>4</sup> The Foundation Center, "Foundation Funding to Address Domestic Violence in California." April 2014. Page 7.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* Page 8.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* Page 10.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* Page 12.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* Page 16.

## Ms. Foundation's Recommendations - "Expanded Engagement from the Philanthropic Community":

- Include systems change, policy and advocacy along with direct services funding;
- Increase support for violence prevention;
- Create connections across the full spectrum of gender-based violence issues;
- Create connections between gender-based violence and other major issues addressed by philanthropy;
- Bring the margins to the center;
- Support men's efforts to end gender-based violence;
- Invest in rural outreach;
- Consider faith-based strategies;
- Provide general operating support and multi-year grants, especially during times of financial hardship;
- Don't underestimate the effectiveness of non-grantmaking activities;
- Be kind with in-kind;
- Consider how to use your "bully pulpit" more effectively; and
- Build a gender-based violence funder community.

Ms. Foundation for Women, "Efforts to Address Gender-Based Violence: A Look at Foundation Funding." 2010, pp. 20-22.  
<https://novofoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Ms.-Report-on-Gender-Based-Violence-Funding.pdf>.

Aside from the information contained in the Ms. Foundation and BSCF reports, some information about foundation funding was gathered from participant interviews. Participants reported that Verizon and Avon's support for domestic violence services in California has diminished or disappeared. A review of Verizon's website shows that domestic violence is a funding priority but that new grants are by invitation only. The Avon Foundation's website shows that in 2015 grants in the range of \$10-12,000 were given to agencies in Pasadena and a few California agencies were given larger grants for culturally specific programming.

*Participants also reported feeling like some foundations think their agencies don't need the money, and that others want bigger picture, larger scale change than they think smaller agencies can accomplish. Participants reported hearing things like, "we don't think you need the money" and "we want to give more than you can use."*

## Government funding overview

Several branches of the federal government supply funds for domestic violence services. The amounts provided by these sources change annually, are tied to the federal budget, and are subject to the complexities of federal politics. The table below summarizes the sources of federal funds for domestic violence services in California, describes who administers the funds, and provides total amounts of dollars, where available.

Federal Department	Local Administrator	Services Funded	Total Dollars
Department of Justice, Office of Violence Against Women (OVW)	Funds are provided directly to local agencies except for the STOP grant which is administered by CalOES.	26 different funding programs (9 of these programs do not provide grants directly to agencies)	Approx. \$33.9 million to California in 2015 awards – most grants are 2 to 3 years in duration. Approximately 38% of this total goes to technical assistance grants, coalitions and law enforcement/district attorneys/courts.
VOCA	CalOES	Primarily domestic violence shelters and rape crisis centers, but also some specialized programs	Approx. \$9.6 million (2014)
FVPSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CalOES</li> <li>• Social Services Administration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CalOES - Primarily domestic violence shelters, but also some specialized programs</li> <li>• SSA – Local domestic violence programs</li> </ul>	Approx. \$6.6 million (2014)
Housing and Urban Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities (CDBG funds)</li> <li>• Local continua of care (which may or may not go to DV services)</li> </ul>	Programs to reduce homelessness	No comprehensive data available
Centers for Disease Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• California Department of Public Health</li> <li>• CPEDV</li> <li>• Dating Matters Initiative</li> <li>• Rape Prevention Education Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TDV prevention</li> <li>• Rape prevention education</li> </ul>	Data may be available from CDC and CDPH

Grants provided by OVW provide the largest dollar amounts available to domestic violence agencies. Many agencies rely on these grants to pay for core services. For example, the Legal Assistance for Victims Program funds many of the legal service agencies nationally who serve domestic violence survivors. Sometimes it is the only source of funds for this population and *without these federal funds, domestic violence survivors would not be a priority population.*

*Unfortunately, these grants come with serious limitations.* First, the receiving agency has to have the appropriate infrastructure to manage federal funds, meaning that they need to be able to keep up with the federal rules regarding the management of grants and be ready for the possibility of an audit from the Department of Justice at any time. If the agency's grant includes subgrantees, which many do, the agency also will be held responsible for managing subgrantees' funds.

Second, federal grants are "reimbursement-based," meaning that money cannot be collected until services are performed. Advances can be provided, but normally agencies need to demonstrate that the work justifying the amount of the advance was completed within a short amount of time after receiving the funds. Reimbursement-based contracts create serious cash flow issues for agencies.

Third, federal grants do not cover all of the costs needed to perform the work. They cover program staff and limited operating costs, but all support staff, including finance and development staff, generally must be included in the indirect rate received. With recent changes to the OMB Circular, federal agencies must now allow grantees to include a 10% indirect rate without going through a cumbersome indirect rate approval process, but a 10% rate does not cover the cost of operating program services.

Fourth, federal grants are given in the larger context of federal politics. The amounts of the grants and the priority areas can change annually. When the federal government shuts down, no grant funds are disbursed. And when the federal government has other issues – for example, currently many grants that started on October 1, 2015 are waiting for budget approval from the federal government because they are short-staffed – there is little chance that an agency's good relationship with their program officer will make a difference in the agency's ability to access funds or make accommodations during difficult times.

Some state sources of funds for domestic violence services are legislatively mandated. Advocates worked hard to pass legislation codifying domestic violence funding. The following table summarizes California state mandates for domestic violence funding.

California Code Section	Administrator	Services Funded	Total Dollars
Funding for domestic violence – California Penal Code Sections 13823.15-13823.16	CalOES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13 core services, which includes shelter (so only agencies with shelters receive 13 core services funding)</li> <li>TDV prevention (small amount)</li> </ul>	Approx. \$20.6 million annually
Marriage license fees – California Welfare and Institutions Code Sections 18290-18309.8	Counties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shelter (and other domestic violence services in Alameda, Contra Costa and Solano Counties and the City of Berkeley)</li> </ul>	Approx. \$8.39 million (2014)
Probation fees – California Penal Code Sections 1203.097-1203.098	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Counties</li> <li>CDPH</li> <li>Some direct awards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shelters</li> <li>DV/TDV prevention</li> </ul>	Approx. \$2.1 million (2014)
License plate – California Vehicle Code Section 5156.5	CalOES	Prevention	TBD



The main source of state funding for domestic violence comes from the state budget (pursuant to the legislative mandate listed above). For the past few years, \$20.6 million for domestic violence shelter funding (CalOES provided domestic violence shelters with \$37 million in FY 2014-15 from all sources) and \$45,000 for rape crisis centers (CalOES provided rape crisis centers with \$17.6 million in FY 2014-15 from all sources) have been line items in the state budget.

Participants expressed some of the same frustrations with state funds that are described above for federal funders. State funds are reimbursement-based and do not cover all program costs. Cal OES sometimes requires significant matches (where such specifications are required by legislation and/or federal administrative agencies). One participant described a delay in processing a new grant that echoes the delay in budget approval many federal grantees are now experiencing. For a one year CalOES grant with a start date of October 1, 2015, the participant's agency has received 10 grant budget revision requests and still did not have a signed contract when the participant was interviewed in February 2016. As a result of this delay, the participant had to ask a donor for \$10,000 to cover payroll.

Some domestic violence agencies receive funding from their local counties and cities, often from those jurisdictions' general funds. Commonly, domestic violence funding will be found in a public service or a public safety line item. Less commonly, agencies will receive funding pursuant to local legislation like the City of Oakland's Measure Z, which funds violence prevention programs.

There has been a lot of conversation in the domestic violence community about the possibility of receiving funding from MediCal or Victims of Crime. The theory is that many domestic violence services, such as therapy or peer counseling, could be reimbursed using these funds. Although some agencies have begun receiving reimbursement from these sources, they can be more cumbersome to retrieve than typical government sources. For example, to be reimbursed by MediCal an agency needs to be a certified provider, and certification requires meeting requirements that many agencies do not have the infrastructure to support. Additionally, the reimbursement delay can be lengthy, making cash flow management difficult. Also, one participant had a concern about whether they would need to formally diagnose clients in order for the services to qualify for reimbursement.

## What's Working

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Participants interviewed about what's working well with current funders raised three areas of progress and praise.

### Funders who listen

*Several participants talked about relationships they've developed with funders and how those relationships make it easier for them to advocate for what they need.* Relationships with funders also means that funders call agencies when they have extra money. Agencies are able to develop close working relationships most easily with local funders, and some participants noted that CalOES has started to listen to agencies more.

Some participants talked about the difference it makes to have legislative mandates requiring funders to have advisory committees so that field input is received before funds are distributed. A few participants talked about their local continuum of care (COC), county-based committees tasked with addressing homelessness. In some areas, domestic violence agency staff is on their local COC board

and in other areas agencies have found other ways to make sure that domestic violence remains a priority as the country changes how it addresses homelessness. One participant noted that funding has allowed them to provide culturally relevant domestic violence survivor support.

### **Reliable, timely funding, preferably unrestricted**

Many of the CalOES-funded agencies appreciate its reliability. Even though state general fund allocations to the DVAP program administered by Cal OES are always dependent upon annual legislative and gubernatorial approval (which did, in fact, experience a period of uncertainty in 2009-10), it is generally considered a fairly reliable source of funds that provides support for many of the core services shelter-based agencies provide. One participant said that they appreciated that funds collected from marriage license fees were now being distributed to agencies and another said that small funds for shelter and food, like funds received from FEMA, were reliable and helpful. Someone mentioned that *the funding that works the best is the kind agencies can apply where needed.*

Participants also said that Blue Shield's core support grants were important to their agencies and one participant mentioned that the foundation provides grants for agencies to improve their technological capacity.

*They said they felt lucky to have a large funder in California who is dedicated to funding domestic violence work and provides core support, builds the field with projects like Strong Field, and supports new opportunities like the domestic violence health care partnerships.*

One participant mentioned the Prompt Payment Act<sup>10</sup> and said their agency would be in trouble without it. Others noted that multi-year funding is very helpful because it creates more stability.

### **More money**

The increased distribution of VOCA funding this year was on many participants' minds. Some appreciated that the increased funds for domestic violence shelter programs were equitably distributed while others liked that they were encouraged to use the increase to raise salaries.

No other increases were discussed, but participants did note various ways that they have been able to access more funding. They liked that funders encourage interagency collaboration because applying as a collaborative often gives agencies access to larger pots of money. Participants also noted that multi-disciplinary collaborations allow them to apply for new sources of funding.

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<sup>10</sup> "The Prompt Payment Act requires State agencies to pay properly submitted, undisputed invoices within 45 calendar days of initial receipt. If the requirement is not met, State departments must automatically calculate and pay the appropriate late payment penalties as specified in Government Code section 927, et seq."  
<http://www.dgs.ca.gov/pd/Programs/OSDS/PromptPayment.aspx>.

## What's Not Working

### What Current Funding Doesn't Support

Consistent with the Ms. Foundation report agency interviews, agencies interviewed talked about the *lack of funder support for core operating needs*. Most government funders, for example, have a low indirect cost limit and varied restrictions about which non-personnel expenses can be included in grant budgets. The needs mentioned included: administrative costs, particularly fund development; technology, both maintenance and upgrades; infrastructure, including facilities maintenance and improvements; food; professional development; and evaluation. One participant said that their agency is afraid of expanding beyond 50 employees because they cannot pay for human resources staff and so do not know if they could keep up with the labor law requirements for organizations with 50 or more employees.

*On the program side, agencies listed prevention and outreach, legal, and organizing and lobbying as some of the areas they have difficulty funding.* Participants also emphasized that the full cost of providing services is not covered. In addition to inadequate coverage of general operating costs, extensive program requirements like the 14 services required of CalOES funded shelter-based programs do not come with adequate funding to pay for program staff, or a match is required. In particular, participants talked about having difficulty fully staffing their crisis lines, covering shelter costs, and covering the cost of providing state mandated domestic violence and sexual assault trainings. One participant said they received about \$10 per day for each client in their shelter.

Other participants discussed the issues created when funding requirements change annually. For example, OVW's Legal Assistance for Victims grant often changes its focus. One grant cycle will be available to anyone providing legal services for survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking, and then the next round may restrict new funding to only one of those issue areas. Other funding, like funding for legal services programs from the State Bar, has statutory limitations that restrict funding to agencies that meet a narrow set of requirements. Other participants raised the issue of the unrealistic match requirements imposed by some government funders.

*Finally, the reimbursement-based nature of government contracts creates significant cash flow issues for many agencies.* Some government agencies provide payments up front but some participants reported that their funders are no longer doing this. The daily burdens created by gaps in funding are obvious. But inadequate funding also cripples the field's ability to innovate and use its expertise to enact larger scale change.

**Question:**  
**What would you do  
if you had more  
unrestricted funds?**

**Top choice:**  
Create 1 month operating reserve

**Second choice:**  
Increase staff salaries to living wage

**Third choice:**  
Increase the 1 month operating reserve to 3 months"

## Other Main Challenges

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The main challenges participants raised regarding their current funding – *aside from the lack of funding for many categories of expenses, as discussed above* – include working with bureaucracies, being told to work with required partners, and the field's own perspective with respect to working with funders.

### Working with bureaucracies

Most participants talked about government funders' burdensome reporting and application requirements and the incompetence they often see in government grants and contracts staff. **Some feel that government does not hold itself accountable to the same standards they expect from their grantees.** One participant said that some government money is so restrictive or time consuming to administer that it is not worth applying for. Another talked about having more than 30 grants, all with multiple, different requirements, but little to no support for a staff person dedicated to grant administration. Although people from the domestic violence field sit on CalOES's Domestic Violence Advisory Council, some participants did not know how people were appointed and were interested in having more of a voice at that table.<sup>11</sup>

### Required grant partners

Other participants talked about a requirement, included in many grant proposals, that applicants partner with specific agencies, sometimes including law enforcement. Some questioned whether agencies would hesitate to challenge law enforcement if they need signatures on operating agreements in order to qualify for funding. Others expressed frustration when agencies approach them to sign agreements because they need to partner with a domestic violence agency. *Participants have found that those "partnerships" often are not funded, so no compensation is offered in exchange for agencies' expertise or the use of their name,* and some had concerns that they would be held accountable for things they cannot control.

### Self-imposed Limitations

Several participants refocused this conversation onto things the field has done that have contributed to agencies' experience of funding challenges. For example, many of the current legislative restrictions on funding were at least co-created by the field. And although some legislative language is outdated, the field has not taken action to change it. Others said that *we accept a power imbalance between the field and funders and make decisions based on our fear of losing funding.* This fear impairs our ability to think creatively and often leads to us accepting the narrowest interpretation of what can be funded. As one participant said, "We are not in control of our own business model."

### Other challenges

Participants raised general concerns with the perceived need to spin things to fit funders' requirements. Some noted that funders seem to want projects with bigger geographic scope and often want something "new" or "innovative." A few participants said that the lack of evidence-based research of domestic violence services presents challenges when asking for funding. Internal agency issues that

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<sup>11</sup> The requirements for DVAC appointees are legislatively mandated. See: [https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201320140AB1547](https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140AB1547)

were raised included the politics of agency boards and executive director transitions, which can impair relationships with funders. One participant raised the issue of operating in a conservative community.

*Ongoing changes in homelessness prevention efforts* are impacting domestic violence agencies' ability to access funding. Less housing funding has been given to domestic violence providers recently under the theory that general housing providers can serve domestic violence survivors on their own. Under the rapid re-housing approach, domestic violence survivors cannot meet the requirements because there is no affordable housing, and because of the trauma they have experienced they are not ready to move immediately to long-term housing; there is a domestic violence exception that is not always used. There are changes to the funding allocations from HUD to the counties and more money will become competitive. Some agencies have lost major HUD grants that were funding their transitional housing programs. Local COCs who administer housing money do not always follow federal guidelines that require them to prioritize domestic violence.

Other challenges that were raised included difficulties for those agencies that serve multiple counties. Funds can be uneven across regions and there are regional restrictions on the use of funds. Some participants expressed concerns with the Family Justice Center (FJC) model. They wondered if funds were being redirected from local agencies to FJCs and noted that the dynamics between FJCs and local agencies differ in urban and rural areas. When a FJC opens in a rural area, agencies feel like they have no option but to partner with the FJC.

Finally, one participant said that there is a lack of adequate and consistent funding in tribal areas. This participant also said that domestic violence funds for services for Native American survivors have been diverted to larger, non-tribal agencies without involving local tribes.

## Opportunities

### What Would We Do with More Unrestricted Dollars?

When participants were asked what they would do if they had more unrestricted dollars they generated the following program needs:

⇒ Legal services with lawyers (most agencies have legal advocates but no attorneys)	⇒ Judicial training	⇒ Transitional housing
⇒ Legal services for survivors who are non-income qualifying, have complex cases, and otherwise might fall through the cracks	⇒ Money for psychological evaluations and expert witnesses	⇒ Short- and long-term housing – affordable, permanent
⇒ Child care on site at shelters	⇒ Services for children exposed to domestic violence such as cognitive behavioral therapy	⇒ Psychiatrist – prescribe medications – and other therapy for adults
⇒ Trauma informed education on site at shelters	⇒ Co-parenting programs	⇒ Work with perpetrators – nonviolent communication, new curricula, restorative justice, community accountability models
⇒ Primary prevention services, including in-school dating violence prevention, community-based, media outreach, presentations, consciousness-raising, self-defense	⇒ Outreach and education	⇒ Programs designed to serve increasingly diverse populations throughout California – versus “special” funding to serve specific populations
⇒ Weave together “intervention” and “prevention”	⇒ Increased ability to provide holistic services; for example, assisting survivors with substance abuse issues, job training, ESL	

⇒ Culturally specific work including culturally relevant services for the whole family

⇒ Bilingual and bicultural staff, especially Spanish speakers

⇒ Work with religious communities

⇒ Create a pipeline for volunteers from the UC and Cal State systems

⇒ Evaluation and evidence building

Several participants talked about wanting the capacity for full language access to their services; one participant used the term “language justice.” Others noted that tackling issues related to housing, education, and employment are essential to ending domestic violence and that with more capacity we could collaborate with others in our community to address these larger issues. *“We are profound experts,” said one participant; however, our ability to use that expertise is hampered by limited and restrictive funding.* The issue of statewide movement building was raised but not explored in detail.

Many participants said that they would use more unrestricted funds to **increase staff salaries**; many agencies are unable to provide regular cost of living increases. Agencies' low salaries make it difficult to retain qualified staff and invest in their long-term training and development. Having stable, knowledgeable staff leads to innovation and creates stable community relationships. One participant noted that without higher salaries the next generation will not stay because they seem unwilling to accept our field's deprivation mindset.

Participants also were asked to speculate about what else they could do (if money was not a concern) to end domestic violence. They embraced the question and generated a rich collection of ideas.

Some of the participants' responses focused on changing how we approach funders. *They suggested we ask the question: where do we have power?* How can we educate funders, particularly government funders, and advocate for social change? Agencies can cost out what we save the government and use that information as leverage to ask for more funding. Also, we can determine what FTE is required to do the work and then demonstrate what FTE increase would be needed per service to increase service output. We can start talking with funders about what it really costs to do a service.

Some advocated for using our collective power to raise our issues with all funders, government and non-government, and be a united voice about what we need. *A critical mass of service providers can ask for change.* One participant proposed an alliance between government funders, who can fund us to keep programs running and the lights on, and foundations, who can fund innovation. Another participant worried that we cannot push funders to do what we want. We need to persuade and invite instead of demand; the “how” is important.

Another set of ideas addressed agencies' business models. Participants felt that organizations needed more financial education. Others suggested that agencies look at consolidation to eliminate inefficiencies. For example, consolidating administrative functions or crisis lines, perhaps even having one statewide crisis line. One participant thought we could do some feasibility studies to see where we could most effectively reduce inefficiencies.

One group of participants developed the following strategy. Agencies collectively should ask for a large grant to accomplish two goals: 1) Determine how to shore up holes in the boat. What should we give up? How can we fund staff adequately? 2) Investment in innovation – our business model is old, where's the leadership? *We need to take responsibility; we are the grand visionaries who can end domestic*

*violence*. The funds would be divided into an amount to accomplish goal number one, an amount for training and salaries, and an amount for research and development.

Another group proposed *the creation of a new entity to address, on a big picture level, what will best serve survivors of all violence in the home issues*. The group would work on statewide and national policy, evaluation of strategies and tools (assessing what works and what doesn't, developing a best practices toolbox, and developing strategies to strengthen member programs<sup>12</sup>), and would serve as a watchdog over government funders (for example, the group would monitor CalOES bi-annually).

Several participants raised the issue of messaging. Some said that we need a new paradigm, a new way to tell the story of survivors and of our work. Some suggested that we stop separating domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse and address it all as violence in the home. One participant suggested that the field needs a marketing firm to rebrand us. One proposed message: *family violence is at the root of almost every social ill*.

As with previous conversations, *the issue of core support came up*. Participants mentioned needing full funding for intervention strategies like their crisis lines. They also said they need money for “bricks and mortar” and want funders to focus on core operating support instead of asking for sexy new programs. One participant talked about their agency's waiting lists and how recent public attention to the issues of domestic violence and sexual assault has increased demand for services. *“Some of us are drowning.”*

Finally, some participants had specific requests. One idea was to reframe domestic violence as a health issue. In the past, when the Department of Health and Human Services housed domestic violence and sexual assault money, and the issues were seen in a health context, it seemed as if more foundations were interested in funding domestic violence. Another idea was to simplify the process of becoming eligible to request MediCal reimbursement for services. Several participants also expressed interest in training CalOES staff.

## Recommendations

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This author's main recommendation is that something new needs to be done to address agencies' inability to maintain sufficient funds to pay for essential operating costs. One possible action foundations can take is to form partnerships with government offices that fund domestic violence so that together they can look at how to fill existing funding gaps. The most productive partnership may be with the federal Office of Violence Against Women. Many of the government dollars that fund domestic violence agencies in California come from the federal government regardless of who administers them. Agencies often hear from state or local administrators that they are following federal guidelines when they impose restrictions on agencies. Building relationships at the federal level may give foundations the best opportunity to influence how government funds are spent.

Another option is to fund the time, space and training agencies need to determine how to harness their collective power to advocate for the funding they need (with government offices as the main audience). Agencies need to develop effective strategies both for working with funders to change

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<sup>12</sup> National projects working on domestic violence program evaluation and best practices include: NRCDDV's DV Evidence Project: <http://www.dvevidenceproject.org/>; NRCDDV's Prevent IPV: <http://www.preventipv.org/>; and FWV's Promising Futures site: <http://promising.futureswithoutviolence.org/>.

funding priorities and requirements and for challenging funders when requirements are untenable. This will require learning what information is most compelling and how to gather it using existing resources. Agencies also will need to figure out how to overcome their fear that speaking up will cause them to lose funding. Although this is always a risk, there are ways to mitigate the risk. Working with expert strategists could empower agencies to ask for what they really need to run the programs governments rely on them to run.

Third, foundations could support the field's fundraising efforts by funding new communications strategies that agencies could use to attract more individual and corporate donors. The field needs more than universal branding tools (like the "No More" campaign). We need market research so we can understand how to craft messages about domestic violence that people will hear. And we need a toolkit of strategies that we can implement with existing resources. An agency may not be able to hire communications staff but someone already on staff can learn to use simple tools to improve the agency's newsletter so that it looks more professional or is more appealing to their target audience.

Inspirational conversations are happening in California and nationwide about the future of the domestic violence movement. However, these conversations will never lead to substantive change until people who work with domestic survivors daily can participate in them fully. People working in the field need to be able to apply their expertise to the future of the movement. And to do that, they need to be able to breathe, knowing that their efforts to address the very real problem of domestic violence every day, right now, are fully funded. They need to know that they can feed the domestic violence survivors in their shelters, pay their staff without dipping into their line of credit, and have a clean audit because they have enough staff to maintain sufficient internal controls. Then they can contribute to the future of the movement and to the goal of ending domestic violence.